King slayer willing to talk

NASHVILLE (AP)—James Earl Ray's lawyer says his client will agree to testify before the House assassinations committee "under certain conditions," including its willingness to investigate a conspiracy theory in the death of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Asked whether Ray would name conspirators in an appearance before the committee, Jack Kersaw, of Nashville, said: "I have not consulted with him on it . . . but I would presume that he would."

Kersaw, who said Ray retained him last week, confirmed yesterday that a letter received by the committee in Washington was written by Ray. In the letter, Ray said he is willing to discuss testifying about the 1968 slaying and directed inquiries to Kersaw.

"I would not want Mr. Ray to testify before the committee except under certain circumstances."

Kershaw said those conditions included a limitation on the power of the committee to control the questioning and a requirement that the panel explore a conspiracy theory in King's assassination rather than work from the assumption that Ray was "guilty, exclusively guilty."

The lawyer said he also would want access to FBI files on King's enemies to determine who might have had a motive to kill the civil rights leader.

like a number of things brought out."